

FROM THE CELL TO THE WORLD

who was at mortal feud with another priest and apparently leading a scandalous life in other respects, she sets before his eyes the dignity of the priesthood which he is outraging with his impurity and his hatred, and threatens him with the judgments of God, if he does not amend and make peace. " What a scandal it is to see two priests keep in deadly hatred ! It is a great miracle that God does not command the earth to swallow you both up. Come, then, while you are still in time to receive mercy ; hasten to Christ crucified, who will receive you benignly, if only you wish it; and think that, if you do not so, that sentence will fall upon you which was given to the unjust servant to whom his master had forgiven his great debt, and who then would not remit a small one to his fellow-servant." And, in like manner, she bids the Provost and Jacomo di Manzi, two ecclesiastics of Casole, to follow the footsteps of the Lamb who made peace between God and man by shedding His blood upon the Cross, to turn their hate upon their own sins, and make peace with God and their neighbour. " I beseech you, in the name of Christ crucified, not to deny me this grace." To Madonna Mitarella da Mogliano, the wife of the Senator, who had written to her in terror, after the mob had assailed her husband, that she had " no faith nor hope save in the prayers of the servants of God," she sent words of gentle comfort, and a reminder that not a leaf can fall from the tree without the permission and will of God.¹

But letters were the smallest part of Catherine's activity at this time. Wherever men and women in Siena were in suffering or in need, she was always there. The sick were healed, the dying comforted when she stood by them ; hardened sinners were moved to repentance at her bidding, and heard the sweet assurance from her lips : " Fear not ; I have taken your sins upon myself." " I never saw any person," writes Francesco Malavolti, " however badly disposed, of whatever condition or state, come to this virgin, whom the Holy Spirit had chosen, who ever departed from her without being first converted to good and without at once going to confess himself sacramentally, laying aside all evil works

¹ Letters 59 (47), 3 (43), 31